

837 /220 cont./

577 "in the end is a man and is only seeking his pleasure."

672 Rape and abduction of a young girl.

684 These two acts are also punished with death by the relatives of the victim. But they too are extremely rare.

583 The kidnapping, the abduction of a young girl usually is a form of
684 vengeance. It happens that a suitor whose proposals have been evaded by
627 the relatives of the young girl avenges himself by carrying her off
584 forcibly with the help of his friends.

However, if the abductor then does not consent to marry her the men of the victim's family have the duty to kill him. The justification for the punishment resides in the principles which have been set forth above.

685 The theft of animals.

674 This act is either a crime or an exploit according to circumstances.

673 If the thief is caught in the act he is killed on the spot by the shepherds watching their flocks. If he is identified after the deed he must give up the stolen animals in order to acquit himself. If he refuses, he risks being either killed by the injured shepherds or of being deprived of part of his flock in retaliation.

685 /221/ However, an animal thief not caught is the subject of admiration
555 by all, even his victims. For it is not easy to carry off his exploit. In
577 order to manage it, the thief must crawl and climb, without noise in the dark of night without a moon, across gorges and rocks, elude the watch of armed shepherds, escape the scent of the terrible dogs capable of tearing him to shreds in an instant, carry off the sheep without having them bleat or sound their bells, and disappear with them silently into the night.

685 On the other hand, to steal animals in a fixed sheepfold of the winter
577 camp is a shameful act that brings disgrace to the one guilty of it.

685 Finally, this code, so to speak, regarding animal theft implies another
577 rule:

783 The thief unidentified and therefore unpunished is in any case

/221 cont./

685 responsible to God for the sin which he has committed. In order to be
579 absolved he must later confess his sin publicly "during a drinking bout
783 among pals or during the shearing." His account testifies at one and the
[784] same time to his pride in the accomplished prowess and to his belief in
punishment inflicted by the Supreme Judge, the remission of which is de-
pendent on this which unfortunately we cannot go into more deeply for lack
685 of data. This aspect is encountered again in another case: that of the
579 destruction of a beehive. That act is considered criminal for, through
825 it, "one kills many souls" (the souls of the bees) and deprives the
[674] Church of the wax that the bees could produce.
[794]

685 This way of adjusting the punishment to the circumstances merits
579 our attention. For it shows us how Sarakatsani society conceives of justice
and reparation in these specific instances.

By shooting at the thief they are merely defending their property
(625) and possible their lives. Any recourse to protection from the police is
not possible to those who live in the mountains and on the edge of a hostile
and indifferent state; so there is nothing left for them but to shoot at
the one who threatens (and in any case with an armed hand) to deprive them
of their means of subsistence and possibly their lives.

/222/ If, after the theft, they are content to demand restitution
of the animals carried off or simply to retaliate in order to be compensated,
that is because there is no longer any question of defense, and all that
is involved is compensation for the damage caused. If the culprit does
not want to conform, his refusal is merely a further challenge, a new
wound to the pride of the robbed owner; and it is in response to this
humiliation that the latter seeks to kill the thief. If he does not do
so he will be dishonored in the eyes of his associates.

● [558] Finally, the pride of the unpunished thief and the admiration of the
others for his prowess are very understandable. Among a people who live
in difficult and always dangerous conditions, courage and skill, even when
[783] directed toward evil, inspire respect. However, the public confession
shows that the bravery does not gainsay the illegal character of this act.